

WAYSIDE NOTES

From Minas Prietas to Toledo, on the Yaqui River, in Pleasant Company.

THE OASIS mule had been in pasture out from Minas Prietas three months, and word had been sent to bring her in by the seventh for a long journey. Upon the eighth she had not arrived, and a party coming with which we had arranged to travel beyond the Yaqui danger line. All the workmen at the rancho (Yaquis) had been rounded up for complicity in recent depredations, and sent to Guaymas for deportation, and no one could be procured to bring in the animal. There were those who predicted that the Yaquis had taken and eaten her, and that the famous mule of THE OASIS had passed into history. But the editor had seen the new moon over his right shoulder in front of the Hotel Arcadia at Hermosillo one evening but shortly previous; and he knew that luck so bad as the loss of the mule could not overtake him, so he rested in the sublime confidence that the mule would appear, which she did—just in the nick of time. But as a preliminary he had secured, (through Pancho Tapia of La Colorada) the services of a fearless *vaquero* to go out after her—for a consideration of six pesos. Then all those who had asserted that the mule had been devoured by Yaquis guffawed and declared that they had only been awaiting the guaranty of six *adobe* dollars. But perish the thought.

Shortly after despatching the *vaquero* a telegram had arrived from General Willey at Hermosillo stating that the party would come the following day, but would not get away until the following Tuesday—so that would give ample time for the boy to bring the mule.

But when the train arrived Saturday morning, there came the general and the rest of the party, and they were prepared to go Sunday morning. The telegram had been delayed in transmission, and the putting off the day of departure until Tuesday proved a ruse.

Doctor Burton, with Mr. Meade and others, who were going to Suaqui de Batuc, and would accompany us a short distance, asked all hands to be ready at six o'clock Sunday morning; to which we all agreed. We got away at eight, the doctor and his party a little ahead. We saw them no more.

Our own party included General Henry Ide Willey, consulting engineer for the Yaqui Copper Co., Mr. James H. Brent of Hermosillo; Mr. R. H. Morley of Saginaw, Michigan, en route to La Bufa; and THE OASIS man going to La Dura, thence to Alamos. We were in no hurry, and rode along the road at a leisurely pace, reaching Cobache a distance of about eleven leagues at three o'clock in the afternoon, and arranged to remain there until morning.

Nothing worthy of note occurred the entire day, save that at a distance of two kilometers from the station of the Torres & Prietas railway at La Colorada, we passed

the construction force working upon the extension of that road. They have now got into work that is quite heavy, and, as labor is scarce and hard to get, progress is slow.

We had hardly disposed ourselves comfortably at Cobache when a four horse carriage came in from Soyopa, bearing Mr. George W. Crowe, who had been out to the Mexico mine, beyond the Yaqui river, in the Sahuaripa district, a camp where THE OASIS man and the smaller boy visited about the first of August.

Mr. Crowe stopped at another house at some little distance from the one where we put up, and Mr. Morley, the stranger of the party, went over to prospect him.

After mutual self-introductions Mr. Crowe asked

"Where are you going?"

For the life of him the young man couldn't recall, nor could he recollect the names of any of the party; and he blurted out

"I don't know."

Crowe gave him a critical glance and expressed his incredulity, whereat the young man assured him with some emphasis that for a fact he had forgotten for a moment his destination, but that when one of the others came over he would find out and convey the information.

"Well if you are seeking to escape from outraged justice, young man I don't want to know where you are going, and you need not tell me," said Mr. Crowe.

At that juncture the scribe appeared upon the scene and explained matters, to the apparent relief of both gentlemen.

Mr. Crowe visited with us until bedtime, and when we separated Monday morning he kindly took letters for the whole party, except Brent, who told him that "when he reached the Hotel Arcadia at Hermosillo, to tell the finest looking woman there that he had seen her husband at Cobache, and that he was well."

Mr. Crowe said he would surely do so.

Monday morning we skated the seven leagues to Rancho Nuevo in four hours, and stopped there at noon to rest, and feed our mounts and ourselves.

From Cobache to Rancho Nuevo we passed through a heavily wooded region, extending for miles about the Cobache mountain, a most conspicuous peak, from which an immense supply of fuel can be drawn for use of the mines and mills at Minas Prietas, when the extension of the Torres & Prietas railway shall have reached Cobache. In fact the entire region between Mazatan and Cobache mountains, a distance of at least ten leagues, and half that distance in width, is covered with a heavy growth of mesquite and ironwood, which would furnish all the fuel needed by the great gold camp through many years.

Mr. Morley and the editor had intended turning off to Santa Barbara; but when we reached the fork of the road, we concluded to remain with good company and go on to San Juan Grande, staying with our traveling companions until the middle of the afternoon,

and parting from them at the entrance to Guasimas cañon, about half a league above Rancho Terai.

Just before reaching the point where our party separated we met Mr. Jesse Scobey, formerly at Washington Camp, who was returning from Chipiona, where he had been in connection with the construction work upon the new furnaces for the Cieneguita Copper Company, now in course of erection by Roy & Titcomb of Nogales. It was a pleasant meeting, and we all enjoyed a short roadside visit.

It was sunset shortly after we passed Rancho Terai, and our ride down the picturesque Sibichicori cañon, to San Juan Grande, a distance of five leagues, was made in the wierd light cast by the new moon, nearing the end of the first quarter, which was quite sufficient to show the way, but not distinctly outlining objects.

It was nearly eight o'clock in the evening when we reached the end of our day's journey. When we knocked at the door of the house Charley Laux came and before opening called out:

"Who is it?"

"Mr. Bird," was the reply, and a united shout by three lusty voices arose inside. Immediately we were admitted and welcomed by Messrs. A. G. Pace, John Sattory and Charley Laux.

In the course of the ride down the cañon my companion had inquired if our hosts to be Americans, to which I had replied affirmatively. When upon our arrival Mr. Morley was introduced to an Englishman, a Saxon and a Silesian, he expressed an opinion that our term "an American," is remarkably comprehensive.

Tuesday, the 13th of the month we remained at the San Juan Grande camp, resting up the animals, and devoting a greater part of the day to an examination of mines owned by our hosts, and their associates, two or three well known gentlemen residing at Torres and La Colorada, of which a more extended account at another time.

Wednesday morning the 14th Mr. Morley and myself started from San Juan Grande, with an intention of going to San Javier, the plan being to cross the mountain ridges, via Cerro Colorado, where are the Santa Margarita mines. A guide who would take us to Cerro Colorado was furnished us, and we took on down the Sibichicori cañon toward Soyopa. We expected a find to turn out, but at the place where it should have been taken the guide said no, and we continued on down the cañon. At each successive point where a turn was possible, the guide averred it was "*mas abajo*" (further down).

Finally we discovered that he was taking us down to the Cerro Colorado cañon, to go up that to the place for which we had set out, and we told him we could have found that route without a guide. He admitted that there is a road across the ridges which would have taken us direct, but he said it is "*muy malo*" (very bad).

We told him that signified nothing to us, that we employed him

to show us the short road, while we could have found without assistance the road he was taking us. So we dismissed him and sent him back. Cerro Colorado was yet further away than when we started, and Soyopa within a league. San Javier was out of the question that day, so we concluded to go on to Soyopa, thence to Toledo, via San Antonio de la Huerta.

At Soyopa we called upon Mrs. H. C. Rolfe, of the Santa Margarita camp, who had come down to the town with the two boys, Clifton and Harold, to remain during the absence of Mr. Rolfe, whom we had seen in La Colorada.

We remained at Soyopa but a short time, and took down the river toward San Antonio de la Huerta, five leagues distant. The short road is right down the river, crossing it in several places; but the stream was so high as to be unfordable, and we had to follow a longer trail through the hills, over rocky ground, down into deep cañons and across steep ridges, making progress slow and tedious.

About four o'clock in the afternoon we reached San Antonio de la Huerta, where we visited a short time, with Mr. Findencio Cons, a merchant residing there, whom I had met in Hermosillo, and is the brother of Mr. Mauricio J. Cons, a well known mining man.

San Antonio de la Huerta is a town of some age, the old church bearing date as far back as 1761. It was long the commercial center of a rich mineral region, being within easy distances from La Barranca, San Javier, La Libertad, and many other *antigua* mining camps, at several of which operations are again in hand.

At San Antonio are the ruins of an old stamp mill, with the engine and some of the machinery yet on the ground, which was in successful operation a quarter of a century since, upon ores from one of the mines up toward San Javier. Below the town a half mile is an old copper smelter, that was operated a short time some eight or ten years ago by Bisbee people. Excessive cost of fuel, coke shipped from the United States, via Nogales and Torres, absorbed the profits, and the enterprise was abandoned.

Below San Antonio a league we passed Jecopaco, the site of the mill operated by an English company twenty-five years ago, which reduced the ores from La Libertad mine, a good gold property now in the hands of a Chicago company. The English concern is said to have been very successful through a period of years. Operations were suspended on account of a cracked boiler, and no effort was made to replace it.

Continued on page 4.

Information Wanted.

Of John Thomas, a prospector who has spent years in Mexico, and who was last seen at Cananea. A reward of \$25.00 is offered anyone who will notify his sister and put her in direct communication with him. Address replies to THE OASIS, Nogales Arizona. 5t.